

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 081503Z SEP 76  
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO USDOC WASHDC  
SECSTATE WASHDC 9467  
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 5997

ATHENS FOR RTDO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, EWWT, SY

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE TRADE OPPORTUNITY: FLOATING DOCKS

1. DAMASCUS BUSINESSMAN HAS INFORMED EMBASSY OF POSSIBLE TRADE OPPORTUNITY FOR US FIRMS SUPPLYING FLOATING DOCKS FOR TARTOUS AND LATTAKIA PORTS. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, FRENCH FIRM RINO (PHONETIC SP) REPS VISITED PORTS LAST JULY AND PROPOSED FLOATING DOCKS TO SUPPLEMENT NEW QUAYS PRESENTLY UNDER CONSTRUCTION OR PLANNED. FRENCH OFFER WAS FOR FLOATING DOCKS, FULLY EQUIPPED INCLUDING CRANES: TARTOUS, UNLOADING CAPACITY 12000 MT DAILY (VALUE: 5.5M DOLLARS); LATTAKIA, 15000 MT CAPACITY (VALUE: 7M. DOLLARS). PORT AUTHORITIES COUNTERED WITH RATE-SHARING PROPOSAL: FRENCH TO SUPPLY AND ADMINISTER DOCKS, TRAIN LOCAL PERSONNEL, AND RECEIVE FIFTY PERCENT OF FEES UNTIL FULL PURCHASE PRICE IS PAID; SYRIANS WOULD THEN TAKE OVER FULLY RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADMINISTERING FACILITIES. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, PORT AUTHORITIES ARE VERY INTERESTED IN FRENCH DOCKS, BUT WOULD LIKE TO CONSIDER AMERICAN ALTERNATIVES.

2. ACTION REQUESTED: USDOC TO PROVIDE EMBASSY WITH NAMES OF US FIRMS MANUFACTURING AND SUPPLYING SUCH FACILITIES. WE WILL TRANSMIT NAMES TO SYRIAN BUSINESS SOURCE AND PORT OFFICIALS.

3. SYRIAN INTEREST IN SUCH FLOATING DOCKS SHOULD BE SEEN  
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AGAINST BACKGROUND OF SYRIAN EFFORTS TO RELIEVE OVERCROWDED

PORTS BY EXPANDING FACILITIES, PURCHASING NEW EQUIPMENT, ADDING RAIL CONNECTIONS, AND PROVIDING CONTAINER AND RO-RO SERVICES (DAMASCUS A-35, OF SEPTEMBER 2, 1975), AND 76 DAMASCUS 3517). SYRIANS PLAN TO EXPAND PRESENT TARTOUS CAPACITY FROM 1M. MT TO 5M. MT BY 1980, LATTAKIA FROM 1.67 M MT TO 5M MT. TARTOUS PORT SIGNED 12M. DOLLAR CONTRACT IN 1975 WITH ITALIAN FIRM FOR DREDGING OF HARBOR, AND LATTAKIA RECENTLY SIGNED 18M. DOLLAR CONTRACT WITH YUGOSLAV FIRM TO EXTEND EXISTING JETTEY BY 710 METERS. TARTOUS AND LATTAKIA PORTS ARE OPERATED BY PROFIT-MAKING PUBLIC COMPANIES; FINANCING THESE IMPROVEMENTS POSES NO PROBLEMS. IN ADDITION, SAUDIS AND SYRIANS SIGNED AGREEMENT AUGUST 23 FOR 75M. DOLLAR LOAN, OF WHICH 25M. DOLLARS AND 24M. DOLLARS ARE MARKED FOR PORT IMPROVEMENTS IN TARTOUS AND LATTAKIA, RESPECTIVELY.  
PELLETREAU

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